

## NAVY TIMES 2 JUN 03

### **Plot your career course** **'Five-vector' plan is your road map to advancement**

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Wondering where you are in your career? Need to know what you have to do to get ahead?

Wonder no more. A Navy Web site soon will tell you where you are in the areas that matter, and point the way to what you need to do to advance – all plotted on a clickable graphic. And, if you're thinking about switching jobs, the site will show you alternate career paths and lay out ways to make it happen.

The site kicks off this month when nearly 22,500 sailors in the Information Systems Technician, Mess-Management Specialist and Aerographer's Mate rating begin testing the new online career management tool to work out bugs in the system. Aviation ratings will come online in September and, sometime next year, Navy personnel officials say every rating will have a basic version of the tool.

The program will plot where each individual is in five basic career paths and show the knowledge and skills needed to advance to the next level. The site eventually will link individuals to an extensive online training system providing training on demand when the sailor is ready to learn, not when a class is available.

Running simultaneously with the test is another by Navy Personnel Command in Millington, Tenn., which is adding its new detailing system for each of the three test ratings. The system allows a sailor's data to be used as a resume, helping detailers find jobs that best fit an individual's knowledge and skills.

As the system is developed, commands will be able to search for transfer-eligible sailors with the skills they need on board.

"This isn't just another catch-phrase or hollow program, it is truly going to be the road map for every sailor," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, Terry Scott.

"We're building this for every rating in the Navy, and it is more important than most sailors realize."

Scott, who has been involved in this effort since taking office in November, said sailors need to realize this isn't only for lower rates, but for everyone in the Navy.

#### **The 'five vectors'**

The idea of a road map for a Navy career isn't new; the service has been doing that in one form or other for most of the past century.

But technology allows that road map to be customized for the individual. Progress can be tracked easily, allowing sailors to know how they stack up in their jobs and get guidance for the future.

The tool essentially is a front-end that taps into Navy personnel and training databases and puts information in a format that can be plotted visually onto five paths – a "five-vector model" showing areas where a sailor must progress to advance.

The five-vector model will be on the Navy Knowledge Online Web site at <http://www.nko.navy.mil>.

Sailors will have to register to gain site access. Everyone in the Navy, active duty and Reserve, has the ability to log on. They need only request access at the site's login page, verify their identity and access is immediate.

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Once on the site, the model will be one of the first options they see.

For first-time users, "There will be a brief tutorial on how to use the system when they first ask to access their five-vector model," said Lt. Cmdr. Gary Kirshner, spokesman for the personnel development command. "It should only take about five minutes."

Though the vectors have been in development for the past year and a half, sailors in the beta test only will see functionality in four of the five; the performance vector will be inoperative but will come online in future versions.

Crossing each vector are four arcs, showing where each vector transitions into recruit, apprentice, journeyman or master skill levels, similar to many civilian career paths.

Here's a look at each of the five vectors, what will be available in the pilot and what is planned for the future.

### ● Professional development.

The top vector in the diagram is a measure of a sailor's ability to perform his job and deals with knowledge and abilities in a rating as well as the job that sailor is performing.

Fred Bertsch, a retired Navy captain who is heading development of the tool at Naval Personnel Development Command in Norfolk, Va., said the information in this vector will be a "best Guess" of where a sailor is, based on training, job requirements and information such as that available in the Naval Enlisted Classifications database.

To improve accuracy, he said, sailors will be asked to take an online survey about what they do in their jobs and how good they are at doing it.

The survey isn't mandatory for sailors in the three test rating to gain access to their information, but completing it will make data more accurate and help developers verify the accuracy of what is in the system, Bertsch said.

In the future, assessments like this will become mandatory and won't be done by sailors alone. Supervisors will log on and verify how sailors grade themselves.

"This functionality won't be available initially," Bertsch said. "But it will be very important to the integrity of the system in the future."

These assessments also may become a way new recruits are evaluated, gauging their existing knowledge before laying out a training plan for the new sailor. This, Bertsch said, will save training costs for the Navy.

"It only makes sense to give people credit for the training and skills they already have," he said.

For Bertsch, the survey is critical to the program's success. He hopes sailors from the initial ratings will take the time to assess themselves honestly.

"We need to know we're on the right track," he said. "We can only do that through the efforts of those using the site. Does the vector accurately describe what they do and how well they do it? We need to know."

The Navy has spent a lot of effort identifying the details of each rating. A Navywide study is in the final stages of identifying, down to the individual task level, the work sailors do. Each task is linked to the knowledge, skills, abilities and tools required to accomplish it.

Likewise, Navy training content is being broken down to a similar level in an effort to identify proper training.

This information will be used to show a sailor what tasks and training will be required to reach a performance goal. The new program also will provide classroom, distance learning or on-the-job training options available to help sailors acquire the skills needed to advance.

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“Although we don’t have a tremendous amount of Web-based training available at the moment, we will have some,” Bertsch said. The Navy, he said, is developing this capability, and much of what a sailor will be expected to learn will be available online.

But doing the coursework will be only part of the equation; sailors also will have to demonstrate what they’ve learned.

“They will be able to go in and get a piece of knowledge by doing the coursework,” he said, “and if your supervisor says you performed that correctly, you will get full credit.”

That verification won’t be available during the beta test but should be incorporated for the next version when the aviation ratings come online.

● **Certifications and qualifications.** Industry-recognized standards such as airframe and power-plant licenses in the civilian aviation community and Microsoft certifications for those in information technology fields as well as Navywide and command-level qualifications such as warfare, watch standing and firefighting will be included.

“Initially it will only reflect some certifications and qualifications such as damage control and [personnel qualification standards],” Bertsch said, “though we will probably have some other certifications, particularly for the IT community.”

The Navy plans to find as many civilian-industry standard qualifications as it can and incorporate these into how the service gauges sailor professionally.

“Every rating in the Navy is looking for comparable civilian certifications that can be incorporated into how we do business,” said Rear Adm. Kevin Moran, who head Personnel Development Command.

● **Personal development.** Ultimately, this vector will show a sailor where he is in the “life skills” needed outside the workplace, including physical fitness, core values and financial-management skills.

“This is still in heavy development,” Bertsch said. Initially it will show if a sailor has had training in personal financial management and operational-risk management.

“We are trying to put college credits on there, too,” he said. “The problem is we can only show what we know about.”

The plan, he said, is to incorporate off-duty education into this vector and give a better measure of progress toward a college degree than is provided by the Sailor and Marine American Council on Education Transcript available through the Naval Education and Training Command Web site.

● **Leadership.** This measures the ability of an individual to accomplish the mission as well as mentor and develop others. This includes general military education.

During the test, the leadership vector will show only the highest level of training a sailor has attained in his leadership-training program. Within the next few years, however, the Navy will change how leadership training is provided. Much more emphasis will focus on what a sailor can accomplish through distance learning and classroom training could be limited.

● **Performance.** The performance-vector measurement of how a sailor does his job and military duties is under construction. It won’t be online for the test because the Navy also is working to develop a counseling and evaluation system.

The counseling portion of the program is expected to come online in July, but a timetable has not been set for revamping evaluation and fitness reports.

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The new system will grade officers and enlisted sailors in a similar manner, and those in charge of others will be graded as leaders, regardless of pay grade, personnel officials said.

Decisions will have to be made, Bertsch said, on how to weigh each vector into the equation.

“For example, an AG3 will have a different leadership requirement than a [boatswain’s mate third class],” he said.

“The AG might not be in charge of anyone while the BM3 might be in charge of 30 sailors. That has to be factored in.”

The system also will include a formula for calculating an individual’s promotion standing.

### **Pay factors**

The Navy hopes to use the five-vector model as a basis for changing the way sailors advance and possibly the method by which they are paid.

“We believe we can build this process to show the actual skills of the sailor and be able to promote him based on his competencies rather than what we do now – that is a Jeopardy quiz,” Bertsch said.

“Then we will be able to not only look at competency-based promotions, but possibly performance-based compensation.”

Making pay- and promotion-system changes will require at least Defense Department and possibly congressional approval.

“There are lots of policy issues this will start to generate discussion on,” Bertsch said.

### **The future**

Giving sailors the tools and ability to manage their careers and giving them the responsibility to make it happen will transform the Navy into a leader in the corporate human-resources arena, one business consultant said.

“Putting this system in place will put the Navy at the upper 10 percent of what is taking place in corporate America,” said Dr. Stephen Covey, vice chairman of the Franklin-Covey Corp. and an organizational consultant for businesses.

“This may start out slow,” Bertsch said. “But the whole package is coming fast.”

“What we will give them now is just a glimmer of what is to come and the possibilities that gives us.”